

## A Message from the Executive Officer



Karen McGagin

This summer the California Victim Compensation Program will commemorate an important anniversary. We will gather at a very special event on July 21 to recognize and honor 40 years of service to crime victims, the work the Program has done, and the people who do that work.

Since its inception, this Program has helped nearly 900,000 victims and their family members and paid out more than \$1.5 billion. The 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary will provide the Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board an opportunity to reflect upon past accomplishments and a chance to look forward to the advancements we will make in the years to come.

We are excited about using technology as a tool to improve our delivery of services to victims of crime. Those advancements will include our new claims management system, CARES. CARES, which stands for Compensation and Restitution System, will streamline and speed up claims processing. The system is scheduled to go live in the fall of 2006.

To help the program look to the future by sharing ideas about how to better serve crime victims, the Board reinstated the Victim Compensation Program Advisory Committee in March. The committee is comprised of 12 members, representatives from state agencies and community-based organizations, that meets quarterly. This month the group heard from the Office of Crime and Violence Prevention about the soon-to-be-published results of the Attorney

General's Task Force on Domestic Violence. Its report is going to be an outstanding tool to enhance domestic violence prosecutions, restraining order enforcement, and batterer accountability. I encourage you to visit the Attorney General's website at [www.safestate.org](http://www.safestate.org) to access the report when it is published.

The Chadwick Center of Children's Hospital in San Diego also gave a presentation at this month's meeting. A longtime partner with the Program in a variety of pioneering projects, the Chadwick Center is one of California's largest providers of treatment to children who have been abused. They have made innovations in assessment-based treatment for traumatized children that are likely to have a significant impact in the field in the next few years, not just in California, but across the country. The August issue of the Victim Compensation Connection will feature the Center's research.

There is new information on the federal budget proposal to remove \$1.2 billion from the federal VOCA (Victims of Crime Act) fund. The House of Representatives Appropriations Committee has removed that proposal from their version of the federal budget. To get the most current information on this important issue and on the progress of the discussion about the issue in the Senate, you may want to access the National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators' website at <http://www.navaa.org>.

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## Victim Compensation Program Commemorates 40 Years in July

To mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the California Victim Compensation Program, the Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board will host a celebration at the Sacramento Tsakapoulos Library Galleria on Thursday, July 21 for staff and invited guests. The theme of the celebration is, "Honoring the work we do and those who do it and celebrating 40 years of service to victims." The Board is very proud of the Victim Compensation Program, its achievements, and the help that it has provided to so many victims of crime and their loved ones.

The featured speaker will be the Honorable Lois Haight, Contra Costa County Superior Court Judge. Judge Haight served the Reagan Administration as Chair of the 1982 President's Task Force on Victims of Crime.

Forty years ago, California reinforced its reputation for innovation and boldness by becoming the first state in the nation to provide compensation for victims of violent crimes. At that time, New Zealand and Great Britain were the only other governments that provided victim compensation.

Today, compensating victims of violent crime is a well-established practice across the United States, and California still leads the way. Since 1965, the California Victim Compensation Program, one of the largest in the nation and the world, has paid out more than \$1 billion to crime victims.



### Judge Lois Haight – Keynote Speaker

The Honorable Lois Haight began her illustrious career in Alameda County as a sexual assault prosecutor. In 1982, she was chosen by President Ronald Reagan to chair the President's Task Force on Victims of Crime.

This task force was responsible for organizing the 1983 National Conference on the Judiciary and Victims' Rights, establishing the Attorney General's Task Force on Family Violence in 1983, and creating the National Victims' Constitutional Amendment Network in 1986.

President Reagan appointed Haight as the first Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Justice Programs. She was the architect of the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (VOCA) and of a program management team for victims of crime. This team eventually evolved into the U.S. Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime.

Upon her return to California, Haight was appointed to the Superior Court of Contra Costa County. She served nine years as Supervising Judge of the Juvenile Court and was instrumental in improving the juvenile division. She helped build a new juvenile hall, create a separate treatment center for young girls, and establish a special residential program for emotionally disturbed children.

She also initiated the Contra Costa County Juvenile Court's new dependency mediation program, helped establish a victim/offender reconciliation program for juvenile delinquents, and placed probation officers on school campuses.

Judge Haight's early work on behalf of crime victims laid a solid foundation that will help maintain the strength and voice of crime victims and their families. She continues to work tirelessly, making extraordinary contributions to California's criminal justice system.

## California's Victim Compensation Program: First in the Nation

California became the first state in the nation to provide compensation to victims of violent crimes on July 16, 1965, when Gov. Edmund G. Brown signed into law legislation establishing California's Victim Compensation Program.

Senate Bill (SB) 1057, introduced by State Sen. Eugene McAteer of San Francisco during the 1965 regular session of the California Legislature, established the program. The bill proposed placing the new program under the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program (AFDC).

Sen. McAteer introduced the bill at the suggestion of Superior Court Judge Francis McCarty of San Francisco. The bill provided need-based financial assistance for families of anyone killed or incapacitated as a result of a crime of violence. Violent crime offenders would pay a fine to be placed into an indemnity fund created by the bill, the proceeds of which would pay for the aid to victims.

"The State of California spends millions of dollars for the maintenance of prisoners in penal institutions and the furnishing of dental and medical care, while the victimized persons and their families must bear any medical or dental expenses on their own, and may suffer additional economic hardship from temporary or even permanent loss of employment," Sen. McAteer declared in a letter to the governor.

The State Department of Social Welfare originally handled the program in coordination with AFDC. Funds for meeting the needs of victims of crimes of violence under the Aid to Victims of Crimes of Violence program (AVCV) were limited to \$100,000. During the 1967 legislative session, Sen. McAteer introduced SB 563, which proposed transferring administration out of the State Department of Social Services, to the State Board of Control.

The maximum amount of any claim was set at \$5,000. No money would be paid if the injured party could be compensated by insurance or other sources.

During fiscal year 2003-04, the Board received applications for help from almost 50,000 victims of crime and their family members, and made almost \$67 million in payments to help victims cope with the expenses incurred as the result of crimes.

### Significant Developments in the History of the Program

1965	Program established
1967	\$5000 award limit set
1974	\$10,000 for wage loss \$10,000 for medical expenses \$3,000 rehabilitation
1977	Elimination of financial hardship for eligibility
1980	"Injury" redefined to cover psychological expenses
1981	\$1,000 emergency award created
1983	Penalty assessments raised to \$5 for every \$10 fine
1984	\$23,000 award limit established
1985	\$46,000 award limit established
1988	Victims' family members become eligible \$23,000 for minors of sexual assault
2000	\$2,000 for relocation \$1,000 for security devices \$5,000 for home/vehicle modifications
2001	\$70,000 award limit established \$1 million to New York's victim compensation program allowed

## Board Welcomes New Members to its Executive Team as Chief Deputy Retires

After five years, **Richard Anderson** has retired from the Board after serving as Chief Deputy Executive Officer. Richard accumulated more than 20 years of experience in the victim services field and was well known for his efforts to improve client satisfaction. Before he came to the Board he led compensation programs in Wisconsin, Texas, and Minnesota. As Chief Deputy Executive Officer at the Board, Richard developed the new hearing officer program in the Victim Compensation Program Hearing and Appeals Section and was instrumental in the early development of the new claims management system. The Board would like to wish him the best in his retirement, and to welcome the new members of the Board's executive team.

**Tom O'Connor** joined the Board in May as the Chief Deputy Executive Officer. Tom served as Executive Officer of the Board of Psychology for the past 18 years. He has extensive experience with board operations, the Legislature, regulations, and control agencies.

**Dennis Boydston** has been appointed Deputy Executive Officer of Administration. Dennis previously served as Deputy Executive Officer of the Revenue Recovery and Accounting Division, and came to the Board from the Office of Public School Construction.

**Laura Hill** has recently been assigned Deputy Executive Officer for the Revenue Recovery and Accounting Division. Laura has been with the Board nearly six years and is an expert in the restitution program.

**Kathleen Andleman** recently joined the Board as Chief Counsel. She had been with the Franchise Tax Board for more than 12 years and served as Manager of the General Counsel Section.

**Debra Gonzales** is the Board's new chief Information Officer. She had served as the Administration Bureau Chief at the Stephen P. Teale Data Center, and prior to that, was manager of Teale's Operations Service Branch.



Former Chief Deputy Anderson welcomes staff members and their children at the Board's "Take Your Daughters and Sons to Work Day" Event

## Board Sponsored Bill Could Advance Restitution Collection



The Restitution Fund plays a vital role in helping victims of crime, and every dollar collected counts. When the courts impose restitution orders or fines on convicted offenders, the job of the counties and the California Department of Corrections is to collect those fines. This year, the Board is sponsoring SB 972, authored by State Senator Charles Poochigian, to improve imposition and collection of restitution fines and orders.

This bill would allow video teleconferencing to be used for inmate restitution hearings. Through the use of teleconferencing, major security risks

and costs associated with transportation would no longer be a factor.

If passed, SB 972 would also require the estate executors of inmates to notify the Board when inmates receive inheritances.

Another provision of this bill would improve local jails' ability to collect restitution payments from inmate accounts. Finally, this bill would allow the court to apply any money that a convicted offender had in his or her possession at the time of arrest toward restitution payments.

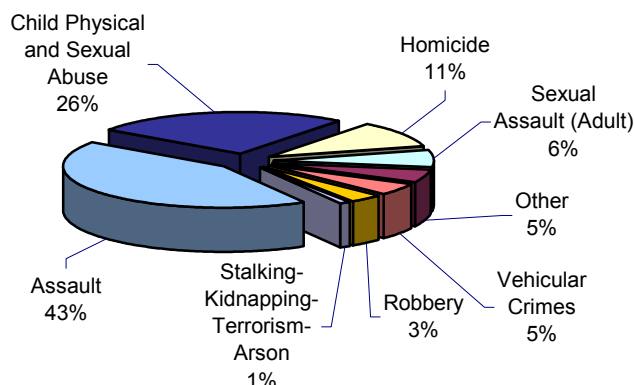
Should this bill pass, the changes would become effective January 1, 2006.

## Board Publishes Annual Report

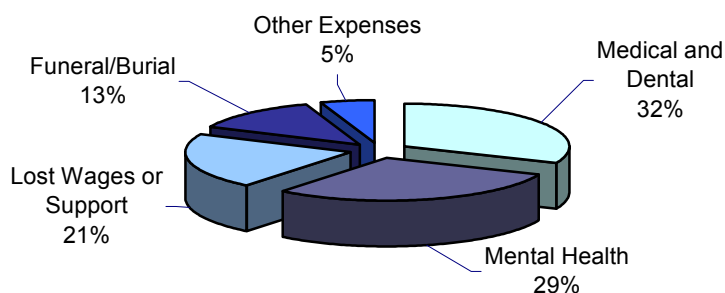
The 2003-2004 Annual Report of the California Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board is now available. The report is downloadable at the Board's website, [www.victimcompensation.ca.gov](http://www.victimcompensation.ca.gov).

The report reflects the number of applications filed by the type of crime, awards by the type of expense and the corresponding verification unit, and even the restitution revenue generated by those counties. The report also features an explanation about how the Restitution Fund works.

## Crime Type as a Percent of Applications Filed



## Type Of Expense as a Percent of Total Awards



## FY 03/04 Applications and Payments

Applications Received	49,665
Applications Allowed	44,202
Applications Denied	5,463
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>\$66.5 million</b>

## Did you know?

You knew that the Board provides victim compensation services and operates the Government Claims Program. But did you know the Board has other important duties as well?

- The Board sets the travel reimbursement rates for elected officials and the judiciary for the state and establishes the living expense rate (per diem) for members of the State Legislature.
- The Good Samaritan Program, which provides compensation to those who are injured rescuing another person, preventing a crime, or assisting a law enforcement officer.
- The Missing Children Reward Program, which rewards persons with up to \$500 for providing information in the effort to recover a missing child.
- The California State Employees Charitable Campaign, which is a fund-raising drive for state workers that donates money to various charitable organizations.
- Penal Code 4900 Claims, which compensates \$100 a day to inmates who served prison time for a felony for which they were found to be erroneously convicted.



### Survivors Share Experiences in Powerful Public Service Announcements

As part of an integrated campaign to increase awareness about victims' rights, educate the public about the impact of crime, and promote crime victim resources, the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) released seven public service announcements (PSAs) during National Crime Victims' Rights Week (April 10-16).

The PSAs, presented in 20-, 30-, and 60-second formats (including one in Spanish), inform crime victims about their rights and the wide range of services available to assist them. Designed for three audiences, crime victims, volunteers, and victim service providers, the PSAs feature the actual experiences of 16 survivors who describe how victim assistance programs helped them in the aftermath of crime.



These powerful PSAs provide vital information that can help crime victims, their families and friends, and anyone concerned about justice and public safety to access the resources they need. The PSAs were distributed in April to major television stations across the nation (including California) for broadcast during the 25<sup>th</sup> observance of National Crime Victims' Rights Week. The campaign, however, is timeless in its message and impact.

Become part of this national victim awareness effort by contacting your local TV station and asking for their help in airing these seven PSAs. They may be viewed as Online Video Clips on this Web site: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/videos/psa.html>. Your participation will substantially enhance the chances that these important messages are aired and heard by crime victims and their survivors, and community members who share our concern for victims' rights.

*The Victim Compensation Connection is  
published by the  
Victim Compensation and Government  
Claims Board  
Public Affairs and Communications Section  
PO Box 48 • 630 K Street  
Sacramento, CA • 95812-0048  
1-800-777-9229  
• [www.victimcompensation.ca.gov](http://www.victimcompensation.ca.gov)  
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